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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2349
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000256

SIPDIS

STATE SCA/CEN AND INL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/24/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: READOUT FROM EMBASSY ASHGABAT LAW ENFORCEMENT
WORKING GROUP

REF: 08 ASHGABAT 1229

Classified By: Charge Richard Miles, reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Post,s Law Enforcement Working Group held its quarterly meeting on February 17, chaired by the DCM. DEA, POL/ECON (INL), DATT, RSO, EXBS and POL/MIL updated the group on their sections, activities in coordination with Turkmen law enforcement entities.

DEA PRESENCE EXTENDED

¶2. (C) DEA's Special Agent on assignment to Ashgabat from the Dushanbe Country Office informed that when he completes his mission in March 2009, a Russian-speaking agent also based in Dushanbe is scheduled to arrive in Ashgabat for an extended TDY. Since his arrival in November of last year, he has had regular interaction with the State Counter Narcotics Service (SCNS) and conducted several training sessions for their officials.

¶3. (C) DEA and INL together are planning to put on two one-week courses in basic counternarcotics techniques, to be led by members of DEA,s international training teams. SA said that DEA, with 86 offices in 76 countries, ultimately hopes to have an office in Ashgabat by 2011, and that their goal is enhanced cooperation with the SCNS to the point where the two agencies work in tandem to conduct joint counternarcotics investigations.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TRAINING PLANNED

¶4. (C) DATT noted that the Turkmen Government had requested military training assistance following the armed confrontation in Khitrovka in September of last year (reftel). The head of SCNS had specifically requested special operations ("spetnats") training, and two, possibly three, such activities will take place in Turkmenistan in FY10. Although four counter-narcotics events have been held recently as part of an Office of Military Cooperation's (OMC) mil-to-mil project, all other events have been declined by the Turkmen authorities. He said that there have been no significant mil-to-mil events since the Russian invasion of Georgia in August.

¶5. (C) He also said that officials from the State Migration Service had asked for a meeting recently. During that meeting Migration Service officials they said that the drug trafficking situation along the Afghan border is "bad and getting worse" and implied that there is evidence of Turkmen officials, involvement in the drug trade.

POLICE CHIEFS: "DRUGS ARE OUR BIGGEST PROBLEM"

¶6. (C) RSO described his recent provincial trips, where he

met with police chiefs in all five provinces. During his discussions with them he explained the role of the Embassy,s diplomatic security officers. The police officials told him that drugs and drug-related crimes were their biggest law enforcement problem. RSO plans to nominate several Interior Ministry officials for the Embassy,s International Visitor,s program. Plans are underway to bring a SWAT training team to Ashgabat in FY11.

EXPORT CONTROL AND BORDER SECURITY PROGRAM

¶7. (C) Post,s EXBS representative said that his office has been working to send Turkmen officials to a number of training courses in the U.S., including Customs and Borders Service officials to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and to New York for air interdiction training. They have also arranged courses on the Turkmen-Afghan border for the Border Service. EXBS was unable to send participants for a Fellows program, as the MOD denied its officials permission to attend. EXBS has asked for nominees for similar training at the University of Georgia and is currently waiting to hear from the Turkmen regarding participants.

INL

¶8. (C) INL Officer outlined current programs, including the Department of Justice (ICITAP) Forensic Lab Project in partnership with the Ministry of the Interior; counter-narcotics project (with SCNS), the Port Security Project, the English Language Training (ELT) project for law enforcement officials, as well as plans for Intellectual

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Property Rights, Criminal Justice Sector Reform, and a possible collaboration with the General Prosecutor's Office on anti-Trafficking in Persons training.

MILES